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MARCELLO TARI AND THE PROBLEM OF DESTITUTION. REVOLUTIONARIES ARE ACTIVISTS OF THE END TIMES.

PHILOFICTION BENJAMIN, COMMUNISM, DESTITUTION, INSURRECTION, LOVE, RIOT

(In this essay, we stick closely to Tari's text and only make a few critical comments, because the text is probably largely unknown in the German-speaking world. A further essay would probably be needed for a further discussion and a penetrating critique).

"Because at its core, the discussion is not about building something, but rather of destroying what is already there, to put what is existing into crisis. This is an idea that I would bet on. I take it

that you understand destituent power as an alternative to constituent power, as the discourse of the multitude's ideologues." Mario Tronti

Becoming Revolutionary, Communism and the End Times

Apparently with a different aim than Tronti, Marcello Tari poses a question right at the beginning of his book "There is no unhappy revolution", which is still troubling Marxists, anarchists and left-wing radicals today: "How does a revolt become an insurrection and how does an insurrection become a revolution?"

With Blanchot, Tari states that the world has long since grown tired because all possibilities have been exhausted and therefore only the impossible counts. But under the rubble of progress, the truth still glows that there has never been a single world (i.e. that of our present moment, which Tari characterises as modernity-democracy-capitalism), but at best an earth, which in turn gives the possibility for a multiplicity of worlds. Until recently, there was the possibility of naming this plurality of worlds. But the present world, which re-presents itself as a single unity of meaning, has itself still destroyed the plurality of worlds. There is currently only one world, namely the world of capital, and there is only one class, namely the "transnational capitalist class" (William I. Robinson).

Revolutionaries are activists of the end times. They operate within this temporality and work towards the realisation of mundane happiness, but they must always bear in mind that the exhaustion of possibilities in this world may also involve the exhaustion of the political activity that goes with it. The historical ontology of the event, meanwhile, has yet to be fulfilled. For Tari, invoking militancy is no longer enough.

He is not at all against militancy, but rather adopts (with Badiou) the Pauline strategy of "as if not", so that the militants can act as if they are not militant. This means above all liberating militants from the need to be someone, or rather to live as if they were someone else or something else: never really present, but always oriented towards an external goal. It is true that militancy can be "used" to put it in tension with a revolutionary temporality and thus ward off its tendency to assume a tyrannical identity itself. But the militant can no longer be a means to an end in the sense of an instrumental theory of action, a body and a voice that both become instruments with which to impose the progressive will of history with communism as its ultimate goal; or a vanguard that remains external to itself, its own life and the lives of others.

Poverty, on the other hand, in the sense of being socially nothing and a nothing, is the very form of our freedom, because it allows us to have a radical experience of ourselves (and others), which also means possessing, seizing and living a potential, and for Tari this is only possible together with others. But on the other hand, only individuals who know what loneliness is can have a relationship with life and death and at the same time know what happiness and sadness and collective and individual resistance is. The problem with revolutionary collectives, on the other hand, is that as soon as they become institutionalised, they lose the very experiences that they have just produced.

If the negation – "we are nothing" – contains the denial of any accidental identity and any socially ascribed valorisation of the subject, the positivity – "and yet we are and yet we are everything"- contains the claim of the potential to become a revolutionary. For Tari, these are not

two dimensions, but a single movement. What remains of the militant is the practice of a form of life that lives life incompatible with the world as it is.

These sentences of Tari's echo the thinking of Jean Luc Nancy. For him, the singular is ontologically already relational and thus plural, whereby plurality itself is the immediate. Being is always being-with. The plural singularities, however, do not constitute a common being; they only appear together depending on the situation.

The same problematic was also addressed by Guattari and Negri in their joint book "Communists like Us". New forms of proletarian organisation should have a plurality of relations in the midst of a plurality of singularities, oriented towards collective functions and objectives that escape bureaucratic control and over-coding, in the sense that plurality leads to the optimisation of the processes of the singularities involved. It is about a functional multicentrism that is able, on the one hand, to articulate the different dimensions of social intellectuality and, on the other, to neutralise the destructive force of capitalist labour. For the two authors, this is the first positive feature of the new revolutionary subjectivity.

One must live against the present in which we are forced to live – a present in which we can do nothing but work and consume, but which is forbidden to use. Freedom is thus reduced to the free choice of various commodity offerings and lifestyle labels. For Tari, this is the curse of the West: there is neither progress nor an eternal return, only the conjuncture of a present that longs to be insurmountable, eternal and hellish.

This present must be decisively interrupted, because only interruption or destitution creates the possibility of an exit. Perhaps a revolutionary exit from the present is the only real choice if we are to resist the act of closure that comes from fascisms of every kind, institutional or existential. We are either confronted with the tragic illusion that the limitless exercise of will could be the key to victory, or endowed with a demonic will that makes us believe that power itself gives us the possibility of freedom. "But one is never free by one's will alone", as Deleuze says with Spinoza. Becoming, for Tari with Deleuze/Guattari and Marx, is not history but difference, which no longer knows dialectical reconciliation, it is the in-between or the between of a situation, and sometimes difference comes like a flash, sometimes it takes decades for something to happen. Often we don't know how to use the interruptions and don't seize their potential, or we understand them as marginal in the endless progress of history. Revolutionaries today live as if in a doctor's waiting room. In contrast, interruption or destitution leads to the end of apathy; it sometimes grasps the impossible that grasps the world. It is the time of small heroism that no longer tolerates anything homogeneous, calculated or constant. If you stand in it and listen to it, it has its own rhythm. At first it is imperceptible, but then it slowly begins to pulse, accelerates like a vertigo and then breaks through completely, while at the same time history comes to a standstill, writes Tari with Benjamin.

Experiencing communism implies for Tari a collective exposure to the extreme risks of mere existence, to experience true solitude alongside being with as what makes communism possible. For Tari, as for Deleuze, life is always a question of intensity. And of irreversibility: true life begins at the point of no return. Life becomes more intense in encounters, in the spillover of emotions, in ruinous falls, lifelong love, in the forest of despair, in terrifying joy and overwhelming failure, but in the end, if you have anything left at all – faith – it reappears, just as the stars in the sky reappear

when they move.

One can, according to Tari, fall into an abyss – in which, as he writes, one rolls, writes, crawls and screams – only to climb out just now and then by pulling oneself up with one's hands, thoughts, lips and breath. The late Heidegger, in his an-archic event philosophy, brought the concept of the ab-ground into play differently from Tari; one is not supposed to climb out of it, nor is it supposed to be jumped over, but one is supposed to jump into it, as a jump into Being as event. Only in the terrible leap into the abyss does complete detachment succeed. Paradoxically, for Heidegger, the foundation of reasons is revealed in the abyss, which does not reveal emptiness, but the open of concealing oneself. The abyss is the between or, as a temporal event, the in-between, whereby the breaking or interrupting through the event is what is decisive.

Constitution versus Destitution

For Tari, all the revolts of recent years have been destitution. The destitutionary spirit that has characterised the recent revolts seems to be at odds with that stable, statuary axiom of modern politics whereby revolution can only occur when a constituent power opposes a constituted power. From this point of view, the constituent power subdues or overthrows the constituted power, leading to the familiar sequence from insurrection to a provisional government, which then proclaims a new constitution after new elections. For those on the left who continue to believe in a constituent power, it is disappointing today to have to admit that in the recent uprisings the destituting moment has not been replaced by a constituent moment. Restitution has not taken place. Moreover, even the radical left, in the absence of a constituent movement or popular power, has welcomed all “alternative” governments without exception – Tsipras, Iglesias, Sanders and Corbyn were defended in the hope that a decisive impulse could be triggered by them, without being able to see that complete nullity was preferred.

All other left forces, on the other hand, aware of the impossibility that a universal subject could yet be formed, engage in the dispersed potentialities of a fragmentary, tiring and at the same time vital communalisation.

Di Cesare's book on revolt only briefly addresses the notion of destitution, which she locates primarily in the writings of the Invisible Committee, Tronti, Taris and Agamben. Agamben writes: “While a constituent power destroys law only to restore it in a new form, a destituent power, insofar as it abolishes law once and for all, can open up a truly new historical epoch.” For the Invisible Committee, destituent acts or gestures are realised according to the combination of the positive/creative logic of creating the conditions for another world into which many worlds fit, with the negative/destructive acts of finally ending the present world, which is shaped in the image and likeness of capital. That is, the destituent gestures follow a “logic” in which “the one divides into two” (“The destituent gesture is thus desertion and attack, creation and destruction, and all at once, in the same gesture”). That is, the destituent gestures create and destroy in one and the same act. This position is certainly still in the environment of various Deleuze receptions. Andrew Culp, on the other hand, wanted Dark Deleuze to re-emphasise the destructive power of negativity, with which one cultivates hatred against the world as it is. Admittedly, Deleuze, on the other hand, often speaks of joyful affirmation and the creation of concepts, expressing his rejection of negativity, which he then always relates to resentment in the course of his

Nietzsche interpretation. In the canon of Joy, the cosmos is a complex collection of assemblages produced through ongoing processes of differentiation. The creation of concepts that say how the world should be appears here as then an eminently pleasurable process.

Di Cesare criticises the notion of destitution precisely in this context, since the logic of positing and creating is still present here. She points out that in the verb “statuere”, statehood still resonates, and that it is therefore rather to rely on the volte-face to bring about the turning away and to follow new lines of flight. What can this mean?

So there is the argument that every genuine uprising contains the double drive of destroying the old and at the same time providing for the construction of the new. But the solution with regard to destituent power certainly does not lie in a supposed dialectical contradiction with constituent power as such. A somewhat more elegant version at least underlines the dangers of getting stuck here in a dialectic without a way out. Constituent power and destituent potential, on the other hand, stand in a relationship similar to Euclidean and Riemannian geometry; in other words, it is a non-relationship. They do not start from the same premises, nor do they aim at the same kind of conclusion. The question is rather how to escape the double bind that has stifled past revolutions so far, to finally ensure that the destituent gesture contains both destructive and constructive moments, but which become inseparable precisely in their non-relationship, in order to generate a level of consistency that interrupts the present and cuts through the real (by recognising it as completed and insurmountable. Cf. Laruelle).

The left intelligentsia knows that the insurgency exists, but always prefers to trivialise its destituting potential and go in search of the smallest grain of constitutional violence. According to the doctrine of state power, this should be a tireless “political will” (following Carl Schmitt) that takes shape and breathes life into a new constitution. Will is power. But especially in the context of what has happened in recent years, this metaphysical will seems to have been lost; instead, what emerges from many left theorists is more of an angry disappointment. Theorists from Hardt to Esposito to Mezzadra say that what is missing is constituent power, which then still needs to be linked to democracy and the metropolis. Tari firmly denies this.

If socialism was nothing more than the bureaucratic workers' administration of a deformed state-capital state, then it can also be said that the global practice of democracy is that of a permanent state of exception that suspends not only the new but also the old “freedom of the moderns”. For Tari, these are the essential functions of the state: to always remain in action and guarantee the stability of a mass at all costs, crisis of presence; to always start from the beginning, never lose control and follow up with slogans, whatever may happen. We cannot get out of this present, it repeats itself incessantly. If the state of exception has become permanent, Tari says with Agamben, if it is the rule of our present world, then the constituent power has no potential in a revolutionary sense because everything has already been absorbed into the sovereign power. From this point of view, all that remains to be done is what Walter Benjamin described in 1940 in a similar situation: “To bring about the one real state of exception.”

One variant of the discourse on constitutional violence believes that if democracy and capitalism had been wedded from the beginning, things might not have gone so badly and there would have been no need to appeal to the political myth of modernity. This variant prefers not to abandon the hope of a “constitutive conflict” that serves as a bridge to a second marriage, or

more precisely, to a new form of government. For the left discourse, the emphasis is always on the constituent process of new institutions (which, according to Tari, is in fact always absent, except for some stage sets of government), while the destituent power (which shows up wherever there is insurgency) is often painted in dark colours. His appearance along the way is seen as an unfortunate coincidence, and even though he is sometimes acknowledged as a necessary gesture, he represents the part of events that must be remedied immediately like a natural disaster. And yet, for Tari, it is only in these moments – streets full of acrid fumes, skies full of black smoke rising above the roofs of crystalline palaces, blurring the identity of each individual while politicising the lives of all; zones that secede from the state, anonymous gestures of sharing with which to express the presence of communism. There is further evidence of this too: when the “people” are in the streets and squares, the government does not rule. The revolutionary problem is how to ensure that this potential is not foreclosed, or, in other words, how to prevent it from crystallising into a form of government.

Collective gestures belong to that class of actions that rely on the temporality inherent in social reproduction and are realised in times of decision, i.e. in times of crisis. It is not the radicals who make the movement, it is the movement that radicalises people. Unlike those collectives that tend towards “constituent” or “constituted” power and locate their strategy in the dialectical relationship of recognition/negotiation with the ruling authority (in the hope of taking possession of the state), collectives that follow a destituent logic hold on to the vital need to break free from the dialectical trap of constituent-constituted power. Tari writes: “It is important to understand that neither the paradigm of antagonism nor that of the constituent is sufficient to meet the challenges of our present epoch. One must always find a way to initiate both a destruction of the present and an exit, an exit – not from Europe or the Euro or who knows what other state devilties – but from this compressed time, this relationship of power and production, this stupid life, these instruments of appropriation. An exit that affirms our being here and now. Only such a presence can bring redemption.”

The accelerationist left also thinks it has a duty to accelerate the course of production and technology. The fact that this form of progress has already led to the devastation of the planetary ecosystem in order to hasten the “end of the world” does not seem to be one of their main concerns.

Benjamin: Violence, Law and Destitution

It was Benjamin's aim to sketch a theory of destitution by moving away from an integrated critique of law, insofar as law is originally produced by a constituent violence. Benjamin, in fact, distinguishes between a violence that establishes law and violence that sustains law, i.e. he speaks of constituting and constituted, and finally of a violence as a “pure means”, which destituted is also the image of divine violence. Contrary to various social contract theories that claim violence can be eliminated through contracts, Benjamin insists on the two functions of violence, namely law-making and law-preserving, so that the observance of contracts is only possible through law-preserving violence, while the obligation to contract presupposes an act of law-making violence. Benjamin sees an alternative in understanding through language, technology and what he calls culture of the heart. In it, a divine violence appears that is lawless

and revolutionary, a purely liberating violence with which violence ceases to be a means to an end and aims solely at justice: As a transcendental violence, it is law-destroying because it does not punish but atones.

For Benjamin, this revolutionary potential can not only help us to acquire the powers of intoxication, but also to practise discipline. Here we find a communist potential that uses that of an anarchist potential, but never degenerates into a constituent power, i.e. an authoritative entity characterised by the concept of law, governed by an unmistakable law and kept in motion by economics.

If anarchism corrects a communism that, as Benjamin says, pursues truly absurd goals, and communism does the same with anarchism that uses inconsistent means politically, it is ultimately the practice of communism itself that corrects its own goals. For this reason, the everyday is impenetrable and the impenetrable is everyday life – it is the true field for the application of communism.

Communism is not an idea of the world, but the unfolding of a practice within the world that puts justice at stake at every point. The constituent violence, on the other hand, is a machine that constantly produces further violence. Indeed, Benjamin points out that in modern democratic states, the police are precisely the moment where founding and sustaining violence meet at a level of indistinguishability that allows the police to operate both through the law and beyond the law. Police violence is the greatest institutional expression of the blending of constituent violence in all its arbitrariness with constituent power and its conservative tendencies. It is thus precisely the actions of the police that make visible the “appropriation of anarchy” by governments, as Giorgio Agamben has also pointed out. The police are the intoxication of power. Is it any wonder that the police today seem to be the only institution of the modern state that has survived the long, shipwreck of sovereignty? Is it surprising that the most common slogan in the protests on the streets of France against the labour law was: “Tout le monde déteste la police” [“the whole world hates the police”]?

Destituent violence, on the other hand, is a form of violence that presents itself in a completely different quality than what came before, insofar as, on the one hand, it does not need an external purpose as a criterion for justice, and on the other hand, it acts outside of the law and eliminates any constituent and conservative pretext, thus breaking down state sovereignty at its core, thus having the potential to put an end to any kind of violence. Destituent violence therefore discovers the space and time of justice in its own execution.

The centuries-long paradox in which we live consists in the fact that, on the one hand, power is presented as peaceful and only violent when forced to be so; on the other hand, destituent power is presented as violent and only peaceful when forced to be so by the coercive power of the law.

To destitute means to create a space of absolute externality (the great outside) that must be carefully distinguished from another, hostile form of externality. For the moment, it is enough to say that absolute exteriority coincides with an absolute interiority (the Great Within) to recognise that this coincidence, which is the neutralisation of the possibility that either this interiority or this exteriority could become an instrument, appears as destituent violence. Within the constituting sphere, violence measures itself against an external factor that completely dominates its

operation. This begins with a fundamental temporal separation. Indeed, the value of the final goal then determines the quality of the means employed today. Or the other way around: it is the means used “according to the law” that determine the rightness of the goal. In this way, the constituent externality, that is, everything that presents itself as irreducibly alien and “rightfully” crushes, has become the self-serving interior of government with all its perverted messianism, and this creates for Tari an eternal present that knows neither exit nor redemption.

Benjamin, Destitution and Strike

Coincidence is the moment that stands in a subversive relation to hegemonic time, and gives the possibility to think through this rupture – not by identifying with the present moment, but exploding it. This is precisely the temporal fragment through which and in which we can claim to be present in ourselves. It is the co-presence of the untimely alongside the right-timeliness of revolution. What is certain for Tari is that neither the good exteriority nor the good interiority are in themselves dimensions for revolutionary becoming.

In his essay on violence, Benjamin draws on the proletarian general strike as an example of pure destituent violence. He claims that unlike the political general strike, which always aims at a partial, external result and thus acquires the character of a constituent violence, the revolutionary/proletarian strike starts from the normal right to strike, but that its true meaning can only be realised through the destruction of state power. It forces the abolition of the right, which coincides with the end of the violence of exploitation. A strike becomes truly destructive when it no longer permits the reconstruction of the power of the opponent. So the question is not only how to create a destituting strike, but also how to transform a political strike and turn it into a revolutionary becoming.

According to Tari, one must understand Benjamin's strike as a gesture and as a quotation, while carefully avoiding any identification with the figure of the twentieth-century worker. In a political strike, the workers return to the factory the next day – a place that today is everywhere and nowhere at the same time – and in the best case they return with a new law or perhaps a few more cents in their pockets or they have forced slight changes in working conditions.

In the destituting strike, on the other hand, the question of the stoppage of work and time is compelling. As a general strike, it is at the same time an attack on the legal order, not only through the conditions that make a destituent strike possible, but also through the transformations of the political strike and its transformation into a revolutionary becoming.

According to Rosa Luxemburg, the real strike is not a one-off event, but a process to be understood in the midst of a much larger historical process of revolution. The Italian “long 68” was such a process. According to Tari, if we are to understand the pre-revolutionary character of the strike that shook France in 2016, we must first understand that the terminus ante quem was the years 2005-2006, with which the revolt in the banlieues and the movement against labour contract reforms had begun. When Tari theorises the destituent strike through his reading of Luxemburg's theory of the mass general strike and characterises Luxemburg's position as one that understands that “the real strike is not a one-off event but a process” and that the “so-called Italian ‘long 68s’ were such a process”, we should remember the historically and geographically

located processes that were themselves a veritable “making visible of a fabric” of collective freedom.

The destituent strike exists in a temporal discontinuity and in a space of autonomy within a revolutionary process that is progressively opposed to the political strike, which stands as a single point within a continuous, dominant temporal line. The destituent strike is not a simple fact, but a constellation of events and counter-events. Within this discontinuity, the forging of alliances and enmities takes place until a cascade of fragments of the suppressed past meets the coming future in the destruction of the present. This is nothing other than the becoming of that historical force that Tari calls communism.

Finally, if the political strike can be initiated by a law and at the same time also aims to create a new law – thus never positioning itself outside the juridical sphere of the state, then the proletarian general strike immediately positions itself as heterogeneous and refuses to occupy spaces of power or make a simple substitution, instead it pushes to expropriate power. The destituting strike demands nothing; rather, it makes a negative claim.

The question of the strike has always been a question of temporality. The classical strike, which Tari calls the political strike with Benjamin, has a predictable beginning and end, it has a reactive temporality that is subordinate to negotiation and, at best, aims at achieving economic improvements on the surface. It represents a temporality controlled and directed by economic logic, a calculus issued in the short term to point to a distant future where everyone is better off, where everyone works for the right amount of money, where citizens no longer need to strike because the law will always be on their side.

The other form of strike, the destituting strike, is clearly a messianic strike that must bring about a disruption in the now – a “now” that breaks through normal time and through this disruption destroys the world as it is. Communism is not a different world, but is characterised by a different use of that world. Today, in the absence of an autonomous future dimension, Tari says that the partisans of this counter-present act not so much through a spirit of optimism and progressiveness, but most likely through a “constructive defeatism”, a polemical term used by Heiner Müller, or, to speak again with Benjamin, by means of a thoroughly organised pessimism. If the proletarian general strike in its exit from the production and reproduction of law reveals the limits of state potential/power, the metropolitan strike in all its articulations is an exit from the constant function of the metropolis. In other words, the interruption of the internal circulation of the command gives rise to the strike encounter that places the singularity of each individual in the context of a collective event in which the potential to produce worlds is produced. It is here that the “shards” condense and allow access to what is most common to collectives. And from here, Tari says with Clover, from the ruins of the West that massacred the angel of history, a light shines forth: we are most ourselves when we become a commune, even if only for a day.

Demonstrations, occupations and riots are necessary but insufficient steps to detach ourselves from the present. At least, as a chain of events, they form a level of immanence in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari’s term, that of permanent intensity. It is no longer enough to slavishly repeat formulas or simply stamp the postcard of postmodern militancy, that activism that indiscriminately chases after “social struggles”.

Joshua Clover writes: “A theory of riot is a theory of crisis. The new forms of strike, all variations

of a gigantic international strike against the metropolis, show clearly that their aim cannot be the proclamation of economic or legal demands, behind which, moreover, lies the classic demand for a future closure.”

The strike thus becomes one of those transformative thresholds that Benjamin describes in his *Passages*. It is a strike without end – that is, not infinite. A transition to another, higher “state of the world”. For this reason, according to Tari, every true strike is also a strike against ourselves: just as the working class has to fight for its own destruction insofar as it is part of capital. For revolutionary becoming, this means making Michel Foucault’s words a rule of life: “Perhaps the goal today is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are. We must imagine and build what we could be.” The destituent strike must therefore entail an inevitable de-subjectification.

Subjectivities and subjects – de-subjectivisation.

The apocalyptic model of governance is thus not only a crisis of capitalism, but is rather part of a hellishly machinic vitality. We live in a non-world that functions but has nevertheless become uninhabitable. Our subjectivity is not external to all this; it also functions and co-produces this kind of world. Producing apocalyptic subjectivities means producing subjects who get used to the catastrophe, largely smile at it, and produce aseptic environments, preferably digital environments, as sites of enforced connections and networks. One has even given this new technology of governance a modern and clever name of survival: It is called “resilience” to denote the absence of exits from misery, which is tantamount to confirming the need to stay happily where one currently exists and does nothing. Deleuze already states: “The apocalypse is a great machinery, an already industrialised organisation, a metropolis. The apocalypse is not a concentration camp (the Antichrist); it is the great military, police and civil security of the new state (the heavenly Jerusalem).”

It is futile to wait for the spectacular end of the world, which may end with a bloodbath and glorious explosions. The truth is, in fact, that this world is already at an end. It exists, but it no longer has any meaning. A world that functions but is devoid of meaning is no longer a world, but a hell. (The question of meaning would have to be discussed here with Deleuze, who countered Camus, for example, that there is not too little meaning, but rather too much meaning, so that hell is rather that of an “over”. In their 1989 *Panic Encyclopedia*, authors Kroker, Kroker and Cook discuss the phenomenon of “over” as a sign of exhaustion. They enumerate “overfished, overvalued, overcommunicated, overbranded, overaesthetised, overmedicated, overmonitored, overvirtualised, overmedialised.” Indeed, world capitalism seems to have entered a paradoxical, an exhaustive panic mode or a lethal excess in which the very phenomenon of “over” points to the largely destructive superposition of financial capital and the capitalisation of nature and the production of a surplus population.

The revolutionary subject is a concept that no longer functions as it once did, back then it was a magnet that attracted all layers of “civil society”; but it no longer exists because there is no longer a civil society to activate. And, Marx might have added: fortunately. To compensate for this, everyone is kept in a permanent state of movement, which means that the revolution only takes place by interrupting and not accelerating anything further.

Up until the recent waves of struggle, the organisations structured according to the constituent

model have tried to create a centralised subject from the outside, of a subject historically tied to the struggles for freedom in modernity, such as the working class. Leftists have also repeatedly chosen the notion of a mobilising centrality of students, migrants, cognitive workers, urban youth, the indebted, the “bourgeois” and so on, all of whom are supposed to “coalesce” into a single governing subject, thus projecting an image onto all economic-political subjects that could serve as hypostasised embodiments of the revolutionary subject at a given moment. This concept has become so flexible for Tari that it has lost all meaning.

In the introduction to a conversation on “destituent power”, Mario Tronti states that the question of the political has changed radically. His impression is that with the emergence of the working class, the worker as subject and worker subjectivity, the modern history of the subject has been brought to its conclusion. The constituent tool functions only in conjunction with a subject. In order to gain a strategic position on this argument about the destituting strike, it is necessary to repeat a statement by Mario Tronti: “The working class involved in struggles within the relations of production can only win from time to time; strategically it does not win and in any case it remains a dominated class.” The essence of revolutionary politics has always been the assumption that political economy and production are the central, decisive front against capitalism. In reality, it is precisely there that one cannot undermine the stability of power, insofar as one always remains within this capital relation. All recent movements against austerity were quickly burnt or were soon defeated because they clung to demands and were shipwrecked because of the impossibility and inability to get out of the “capitalist discourse”.

What has happened over the years regularly takes the form of major conflicts deprived of a relevant revolutionary subject, which in turn means that the opacity of the subjectivities involved usually prevails. Or, more importantly, they are moments of intensity in which the actors shed their social masks, under which another one emerges, namely a common mask that exposes a nameless force without any mediation. This is an event to which governments, the media and even part of the social movements try to respond by identifying the event with subjective identities that they objectify each time as the “enemy within”: the dark cloud of the black bloc, the anarcho-autonomist bogeymen, the spectre of the rioters or simply the “terrorists”. Faced with the obvious impossibility of identifying the “subject of transformation”, there are those who try to shift the discursive frame by speaking of a generic struggle between the elite and the people, or between the powerful and the poor, or even entrust themselves to a statistical game, the famous “99 percent”. They do this while continuing to feast on a centrality produced from above and represented from below.

According to Tari, we live in a time when the issues of modernity have long since faded. It is precisely this fact that leads some thinkers to believe that we are unfortunately living in a “time without an epoch” or postmodernity. The modern epoch has chosen self-consciousness as its organising principle, namely the subject, and it has done so after the end of the principle of the One (Greeks) and then of nature, as Reiner Schürmann (in whose work the term “destitution” appears prominently) has shown. Modernity has brought forth the free subject of action, which professes the principle of autonomy or free self-legislation. In this, it is reason that makes its self-determination possible, and thus the subject is precisely not individualised, but proves to be identical with all other subjects. Descartes’ “cogito” was set transcendently and finally the

transcendental subject was even linked to the human being and thus substantialised. In the name of the true and free subject/human being, the most serious crimes in history were legitimised. The universalist ethics of modernity also set the self and the other as identical subjects in their essence. As Kurt Röttgers has pointed out, the figure of the stranger or the third is unknown to them.

For Tari, the death of the subject opens up an anarchic epoch without foundations. We live in the epoch of the non-subject. For Röttgers, this epoch is postmodernity, in which the subject disappears. For Röttgers, the subject of modernity, which was considered the point of unity and the enabling condition of science and moral action, has long since become ornamental and at the same time functionless. For Röttgers, it becomes an appendage of the between of the communicative text, in which each self sees itself in the context of the other. But in order for the self and the other not to be mere intersubjectivity, which is merely a philosophy of recognition, it requires the introduction of the third that intervenes and observes. The third or the stranger, however, is nothing substantial, but a relational relationship (Röttgers) in which no one is a third per se, but in which the occupation of the positions of self, other and third constantly changes and rotates. Strangeness or the third are supernumerary and uncounted, Röttgers says with Badiou.

The subject of modernity that our ancestors reflected on was certainly capable of resisting – and even starting revolutions – but, enclosed in its dense social identity, it also offered power a series of props. Techniques of discipline were exercised on and through the body via work, family, sex, school, religion, war and countless other moments, so that the subject was almost entirely enveloped and shaped by a web of domination. The subject is always first a subject.

Metropolitan subjectivity

Contemporary Western metropolitan subjectivity, on the other hand, is entirely ephemeral or fluid, and as Tari says, “alienated” above all from itself. But perhaps the residual subject is still far too enamoured of itself, unable even to take the Other in the self really seriously. This liquefaction is both an original sin, but also precisely the greatest potential, precisely because it can no longer offer a substantial point to power. Subjectivity in the big city today is completely strapped into a dozen apps on a smartphone. It is a pocket subject wrapped in objects that show how production, circulation and consumption have become phases of control and behaviour management. The current infrastructures of networking based on mobile devices such as the smartphone, web-based television and eventually the smart house and smart city model a new kind of hyper-control. Networked television is a tool for totalitarian screening and spying on subjects. It collects enormous amounts of data, it registers when, where, how and for how long you use the TV, it sets cookies and records the apps you use, the web pages you visit and how you interact with the content.

The smartphone, in turn, has led to a real change in the hardware of digital infrastructures, insofar as the operations, functions and some options are no longer accessible to the user, unlike the laptop. In this process, the baseband chip takes on an important function, insofar as all communication with the outside – SMS, email, data, telephone – must pass through it. It will eventually become more and more fused with the inside of the microprocessor, which means

that the user can no longer control or know anything about the processors. Smartification, which is based on algorithmic regulation, is part of a new type of cybernetic governance. For Bernard Stiegler, this is the exploitation, storage and reproduction of a ternary digital retention that seeks to eliminate all structural conflict, disagreement and controversy.

The supposed shortcoming of non-transparency resulting in suspicion can be shifted in two directions. At the moment, we are witnessing the tendency of a lurch of excess towards transparency. Not only is the willingness to allow oneself to be monitored by the state unrestrainedly increased, but every detail, no matter how embarrassing, is willingly revealed to a diffuse public, e.g. in the mental exhibitionism of certain talk shows. Mobile phones that reveal the user's location, loyalty cards that reveal his or her wishes are hardly perceived as an invasion of privacy any more, but are most welcome as recognition of wish lists for goods and for security. The more and the more precisely someone is perceived and observed, according to Kurt Röttgers, the more he feels that he is taken seriously as a person. That is why today even those who do not join the general exhibitionist willingness to be transparent make themselves suspicious; they obviously have something to hide that is worse than the perversions that everyone likes to admit publicly, for example, if they do not carry a mobile phone or refuse customer cards. Thus, under increased expectations of transparency, suspicion is automatically directed towards the non-transparent positions in the network. (Developing one's own invisibility on different levels is therefore, according to Tari, not a whim, but an essential way to continue to exist in revolutionary becoming. Nevertheless, one has to be careful: Invisibility does not mean organising a circle of professional conspirators or even going underground. It means finding a way to deform the public's perception).

In his new book, Jonathan Crary also assumes that there can be no revolutionary subjects in the social media, insofar as the internet only produces subjects interested in themselves, who cannot imagine any other goals than individual and private ones. For Crary, this is not just about control, but, with Bernard Stiegler, about the creation of mass behaviour and the synchronisation of a hyper-consciousness that leads to the decomposition of the social as such. Not so much control, but the passive receptivity of streams of stimuli is the problem, the rehearsal of a behaviour that loses, for example, the ability to see a face in its temporal depth, to grasp the signs and sound of experiences acquired over a lifetime.

For Tari, we live in a time of happy hours and evenings spent pumped full of MDMA in the hottest bars in the metropolis, mourning a community that never existed. Or they are evenings spent full of regret, and even more sobering, time spent with a petit-bourgeois and only slightly alternative family after a day of hard work selling smiles to clients, bosses, managers, the village co-op, the social centre in the posh neighbourhood. Everything is allowed as long as we avoid thinking about the catastrophe or the iron face of freedom that the present moment offers us.

The foreign and the non-subject

Just as government is no longer in government, labour is no longer labour and the subject is outside the subject. The real producers of subjectivity today are the designers of the technological devices, Tari writes with Crary, just as the real power is in the hands of the

technological and economic order of the world. Today, more than ever, it makes sense to speak of alienation as a state of generalised exteriority – the self is always somewhere else, never “here and now”, its empty place occupied and colonised by power. However, according to Tari, it is precisely the strangeness of the non-subject that should be pushed to its limits. The foreign and “self-alienation” are among the most important principles of revolutionary messianic thought. It is the path that leads man out of his narrow dwelling and on which discontinuity is worshipped. At the same time, self-alienation is one of the techniques that create a certain distance between us and the present, between us and that which dominates us. But Benjamin also warned us of the alternative at the heart of the fascist project: a self-alienated humanity that ultimately experiences its own annihilation as the highest aesthetic pleasure.

This also coincides with Kurt Röttgers’ introduction of the foreigner, who is excluded from cultural imperialism, which opposes *Eigenheit* and property to the foreign. For Röttgers, it is instead about a sphere of the non-own, in which the foreigner, whether as seducer or political enemy, is there for us because we want him or her to be. Multiculturalism, on the other hand, tends towards the levelling of all idiosyncrasies. Cultural imperialism and cultural relativism agree that foreignness should not be, but that this entails a loss of individual uniqueness.

According to Jean-Luc Nancy, the non-subject finds its positivity in representing what would happen if politics and sovereignty were separate, or rather in a politics that no longer projects itself onto a subject but exists “in the order of the subjectless regulation of the relationship between subjects”, be they individuals or groups. Being, for Nancy, is co-being, and every singularity is relational, because immediate is the relation itself. The plural singularities do not constitute a common being, but only ever emerge together, Röttgers writes. Freedom is not possessed, it is the self of being-outside-itself. Being-with is a score into which the I can inscribe itself. Freedom is not an accident of an autonomous subject, nor is it collective, but it is uniquely shared as social freedom. In this sense, one can imagine a regulation through equality and justice that does not presuppose the assumption of a subject. Communism, too, would have to alienate itself from itself in order to destroy that which blocks its realisation.

The contemporary non-subject, Tari points out, is also a creature in the Benjaminian sense of the word: a persona without content, a nature without grace, deprived of its foundation and oscillating between a subhumanity and a superhumanity, a kind of life that pays homage to the state of exception, half “Mickey Mouse existence” and half “Chaplin angel” – but which, precisely because of this state of emptying, also has the chance to survive the end of the civilisation of capital and to reach another dimension of life. For Benjamin, politics was “the fulfilment of non-intended humanity.” This creature is the nascent surplus proletariat, a social nothing, and therefore not only has nothing to lose, but through its own powerlessness has the potential to be everything. But it can only gain access to this fullness if it agrees to discard all that it is.

The angel of history

The angel of history turns his back on the future; his gaze is fixed on the historical past that has piled up at his feet and which appears to him not as continuity but as a single catastrophe. He wants to heal the wreckage, but from paradise, or what we call progress or the future, blows a wind so strong that he is prevented from his mission. The angel fails, but he retains the feeble

messianic power to blow open the continuum of history. Which means that the creatures, for their part, have the opportunity to look him in the face. If they manage to detach their gaze from the chain of events that hypnotises them, they would notice that the angel does not see them, but only the accumulation at his feet, while the storm of progress drives him backwards into the future. The creatures are seized by this catastrophe and are called upon again and again to participate as debris. If the angel could close his wings and stop himself, then perhaps he could save them by snatching them from the destructive storm of progress at the last moment, thus restoring the rupture beyond the present.

As an early symptom of our new epoch, the new angel seems to have become an “unhappy angel”, as Müller wrote in a 1958 poem of the same name. An angel who no longer looks to the past, to which he now turns his back, and while the past casts debris on his wings, the storm that comes from the future beats his whole body, pokes into his eyes, renders him speechless, and so the angel stops.

The creature is the singular, anarchic and lonely embodiment of a profane, countless and fragmented class, without qualities and without hope. But precisely because it is without hope, the creature can spare the world, if only it knew how to stop the storm of progress that prevents the angel from performing the supreme gesture of messianic recomposition. Ultimately, according to Tari, the creature is nothing other than the image of the plebiscite described by Michel Foucault, the remnant of all subjectivities that form the limit of all power and which, being more than just the other pole of the dispositive, as French philosophers sometimes seem to claim, are always characterised by a condition of non-power. Logically, there is a non-power that corresponds to a non-subject. For Tari, the task of revolutionary theory, if it has one, is to examine the form of the potential of this non-power and the form of life of this non-subject. Both are forms that can only be fully explicated when the self is in tension with the first person plural. Every time we say I on the outside, there is a we that echoes on the inside. And vice versa. This is the “we that I am” that underlies all past experiences that converge in the present, but it is also the “we” that emerges in the coming struggles in contact with the extreme risk of destruction. The angel of history is perhaps nothing other than the messianic figure of this “we” that has not yet managed to make itself known as such.

There is certainly a “we” of revolutionary becoming, but it cannot exist before the moment each of us enters this world; much less can it exist within the confines of a messy socio-economic and techno-political identity. In particular, it can never be outside the experiences and zones through which it is generated. But, lest it be forgotten, it is an “us” without hope.

Communism has a meaning, but it is not in force: this is what, according to Tari, we must try to solve practically and without waiting, in order to make the revolutionary process a reality. By communism, Tari understands with Marx the real movement that eliminates the present state of things. For those who wait and are guided by hope, it seems that they live trapped in a situation of powerlessness in relation to the present and fear/hope in relation to the future. In reality, these are not mutually exclusive perspectives. For Tari, they are dialectically connected, as if they were gradations of our being in the world that perhaps signal the only thing that matters after all: destroying the dominant present. Pessimism must be organised. The destitution of the present begins with the strike of the bourgeois feelings evoked and produced by the subject apparatus.

Only in this way can a new education of feelings be initiated.

Being in the middle of things means that the emergence of a potential does not have to mean the elimination of powerlessness. Instead, we need to understand that the latter is a condition to which we must surrender in order to understand what a potential could be, so as not to drown in the waves of sentimental voluntarism. Agamben writes: "To have a potential is really to be at the mercy of one's own impotence." It is this surrender to powerlessness that enables a group to have the courage to challenge hostile forces. Their position is suggested by the practices we see in revolts around the world: a global revolt of "territories" against the globalised metropolis. And each revolt exceeds the will of the activists for potential.

Form of government, city and state

From the eighteenth century onwards, the territory of the state is conceived on the model of the great cities. Thereafter, the city becomes the model for all territories and the police become the form of rationality demanded by governments, turning all other places into "deserts". A territory dominated by security apparatuses corresponds to this form of governance. The "metropolitan model" has become the matrix for regulating the totality of the state. Foucault claims that government is interested in connections, and today we know very well what this means: a government based on security is first and foremost a government of surveillance. Today, fear is the most obvious emotion, but melancholic euphoria is also sprouting from every pore (fed by the consumption of commodities instead of active relationships). Depression, jealousy and selfishness are all produced and manipulated within a technology of governmentality, from the molecular to the molar. What we call egoism at the molecular level is called property at the molar level.

For Tari, the metropolis is the technological organisation of generalised hostility, the comprehensive instrumentalisation of a particular emotional tonality that must be broken if we are to discover "the character of our problem", i.e. that of the enemy. This is the main objective of a "logistical revolt" at the height of the epoch. But it is not that the contemporary metropolis is to the factory as the new multitude is to the old working class; this is an equation that fails because of its inability to recognise the ontological and political seismic shift between the subject and the non-subject, between political economy and cybernetics, between state sovereignty and governance, between principles and anarchy.

We are stuck in the metropolis. There is no place in the West, rural, urban, mountainous or coastal, that has not been reached by capital. It is no exaggeration to say that for the majority of metropolitan dwellers, i.e. people in the West, life is lived through thousands of technological gadgets through which capitalism has not only gained astounding advantages but has also been given the opportunity to control and shape life on a daily basis, right down to the most intimate level. For Tari, we no longer live in a world, but in an "operative space".

However, the city and everything connected to it is now something that belongs to the historical memory of civilisation. What exists is no longer really urban, neither from the perspective of urbanism nor from the perspective of urbanity, but it is mega-political or co-urban. Fighting the metropolis means creating the possibility of slowing down the cybernetic speed, i.e. fighting a

fundamental aspect of nihilism. This is no easy task because, as Ernst Jünger wrote, “it is infinitely easier to speed up the movement than to bring it back to a calmer path”. That is why the nihilists have an advantage over everyone else.”

Urbanism has been pushed out of the centre of state action; what we see today is instead a hegemony of infrastructure: space is no longer that of architects, says Tari, but of engineers, builders of bridges, roads, flyovers and railways. This signals not only a significant marginality of ruling politics (for capitalists, any space can easily become a rubbish dump or a consumerist theme park), but also of the potential that a territory could develop for revolutionary developments. This is why today's governments are encountering difficulties, not because of demands made against austerity, against the financial crisis or in relation to labour, but because of territories that refuse to change once again to follow civilisation. Or because of conflicts that create militant oases where once there was only desert. This is another reason why the struggle must reach into language itself to destroy its information and communication value, its function as an infrastructural link that cuts through, changes and dominates living beings from the outside.

Power today seeks to divide the world by retreating into safe zones from which it dominates the rest, or perhaps to escape the rest. This escape from the rest of the world can be mirrored in the lifestyles of the “alternative communities”. Yet Tari is quite sure that there will never be a “gated community” far enough away to completely eliminate the possibility of “the rest” destroying it, perhaps by simply leaving it to rot.

Territory and Destitution

Just as there is a messianic time pulsating within the time of history, there is also a destituting territory within the constituting territory. No, one cannot really live in the uninhabitable. What we can inhabit, according to Tari, is neither the metropolis nor the territory, but the surplus of the antagonistic relation.

Carl Schmitt interprets the meaning of *nomos* by invoking the etymology of the Greek word “*nemein*”, which is typical of Western notions of appropriation, distribution and production. He is certainly right when he accuses socialism and liberalism of having excluded the first term in order to concentrate on distribution and productivity. Western history is to be found in this first, constituent gesture. The question of earth/territory brings with it the question of law, because every appropriation/occupation of territory corresponds to an act of measurement that takes the measure as the basis for everything that comes after, beginning with the establishment of property. It is precisely for this reason that the destitution of law always begins with the earth, with the territory.

The field should not be thought of as a physical or geographical place, but as a condition of governance that is simultaneously spatial, temporal and existential. The creation of a territory – a place where inclusion/exclusion can function – is perhaps the first act of law that constitutes political space in terms of managing and neutralising conflicts between different forms of life. The messianic character of territory, on the other hand, derives from the potential to disable the gesture of appropriation; that is, to force recomposition through the destruction of that which perpetuates separation and to fully inhabit the earth, which then becomes one world.

The occupation of a territory, Schmitt asserts, determines the fundamental movement inwards and outwards, primarily through the decision on the order of property, which is – and Schmitt quotes Kant here – a kind of supreme property of the community as a whole. Property is essentially modelled by the relations of friendship and enmity with other groups: one always occupies something that is either empty or where someone is already to be found. Western appropriation has gradually expanded to include all possible spaces. Exclusion is becoming more and more internal. For example, in killing Hussein, Gaddafi and Bin Laden, Western states have issued themselves a licence to kill. Through the licences in extra-state executions of sovereign states, the war against terrorism in turn takes the shape of terrorism. The sovereign states know how to protect themselves against the imminent danger of terrorism only by terrorising their own population with total surveillance, or, to put it another way, the war against terrorism on the outside reproduces terrorism on the inside. Not necessary to say that the killings imply a moral warfare with which the enemy must be destroyed. Consequently, the wars degenerate into wars of extermination. Even with Carl Schmitt, Tari says, this could not have been done.

Interruption, standstill and destitution

Benjamin speaks of the image of dialectics as a state of immobility – dialectics at a standstill. For him, a constellation or connection arises between a moment of the past to be saved and the now. This constellation is torn out of its context in order to enable cognition in the now. Benjamin writes: “In this structure he [the historical materialist] recognises the sign of a messianic event, or, in other words, a revolutionary chance for the suppressed past.” The dialectical image is that in which what has been unites with the now in a flash to form a constellation (in contrast, the relationship of the present to the past is purely temporal and continuous). The Messiah does not only come at the end of an infinitely long period of time, he can appear at any moment of the now, he materialises the unexpected, which indicates that nothing is as it was. Here there is the double structure that on the one hand one remains arrested in the real of one's time, and on the other hand suddenly nothing is as it was. The potential has to be extracted from the facticity of the present. The continuum of catastrophe forces us to think of redemption from it as its negation. However, in the transition, this messianism is threatened by the danger of falling into the abyss, or the rupture shows up in the class action at best as a novelty in the continuum. Or the lightning break only repeats itself constantly, so that the repetition remains the essential thing.

Benjamin knows the danger of transitions: “In them, meaning plunges from abyss to abyss until it threatens to lose itself in bottomless depths of language.” In view of the current Ukrainian war and a smouldering threat of nuclear war, Günther's Anders' remarks on the apocalypse seem even far closer to reality. The effects of nuclear war, according to Anders, will no longer show any trace of duality, as the enemies will form a single, vanished humanity. It seems that there will be only one humanity when there is no more – when the last human being has disappeared from the face of the earth. At the same time, however, Anders points out that apocalyptic passion has no other goal than to prevent the apocalypse. We are only apocalyptic so that we can be wrong. Turmoil is not simply mass agitation, a chaotic tingling or a series of actions, but a standstill, an

immobile movement, the blocking of history itself. Benjamin points to a different use of time and the political. Marx and Lenin were not at all inspired by Romanticism when they spoke of insurrection as an art and never as a science. Insurrection is the art of suspending politics. Therefore, one must not only think of the occupation or destruction of a territory when it is saturated with hostility within the metropolis (e.g. in Gentry neighbourhoods or fascist suburbs), but in terms of the possibility of dissolving it from within and investigating the possibility of putting it together differently, not in the abstract, but in life itself.

If a medial territory means that the subject is in that territory, but also that the territory is an inside of the subject, this means that the two moments are in a relationship of mutual immanence, which neutralises the traditional subject/object pairing. Normally, the relationship between a subject and a territory is manifested through the appropriation and exploitation of the second by the first, or by the subject becoming one of the functions of a constituted territory. The fact that the destituent potential is contained in a territory means both the destitution of the subject and the negation of the two possibilities of relation that the metropolis offers – property or device – in order to enter into another kind of becoming, in which not only is the abusive relation between the poles abolished, but the separation between territory and subject falls away and something else occurs. So whoever said that it is necessary to “become territory” was right, in the sense of destroying it rather than producing, occupying or enduring it. So using a territory would mean exactly this: neutralising its specific economy by breaking down its elements, dissolving its ties and looking for another form of contact that opens up the space and time of dwelling – and thus also of use – to both (non-)subjects and non-places. This would mean, in other words, inhabiting it and destroying it through use.

The difficulty of inhabiting lies in the challenge of using something that, like territory, has emerged as a means of conquest. Moreover, it is difficult to surrender to places and let them do the taking rather than taking it for themselves. To expropriate rather than re-appropriate. Re-appropriation – now a common “key word” among antagonistic movements – is even more ambiguous in this sense, because if it is not preceded by a “common” process and completed by a “common sense”, then at best it leads to an imitation of the constituent gesture of law.

Destitution comes from stopping the present when everything stands still, which is precisely then the recurring nightmare of metropolitan government. Beneath the infrastructure, the pixels, the thousands of screens that separate us from the world and from each other, we find a long, deep landscape: beneath history, beneath modernity, lies not the beach, but the human being we are missing. So Tari with Laruelle.

Tari asks: “How can we think of transforming the structures that allow the revolution to survive if we don’t first transform life itself, our way of living in the world?” The collective appropriation of the means of production and exchange was obviously not enough to transform everyday life itself. The fulcrum of the Russian communists’ concern was the transformation of existence within the new space and time opened up by the revolution. But beyond this, it was precisely the transformation of the form of everyday life that provided a good antidote to the inevitable reformist aspirations of the petty-bourgeois spirit during the NEP. In 1930, just before its excommunication, there were seventy-seven communes in Leningrad alone, each with its own way of life, its own form and its own lifestyle.

It was the disurbanists who criticised the communal house in the early Soviet Union, pointing out what should be abolished as soon as possible: the dirt and clutter in the corridors, the barracks-like canteens, the endless queues for food and, finally, the police-controlled Taylorisation of daily life, indeed, ultimately the resemblance of the supposedly socialist collective housing to depersonalised ant farms, instead of being places of collective life for free and conscious workers.

Another interesting idea of the disurbanists, according to Tari, was to plan modular housing complexes that could be dismantled and transported, against what they saw as the petit-bourgeois idea that the house and the city were eternally tied to one place. They imagined a kind of “nomadic city”, as Deleuze and Guattari envisioned it many years later in a seminar on the city in the early 1970s: “Wonderful utopia of the disurbanists: the creation of nomadic cities spread over the vast Soviet territory, supplied by natural energy sources and transformed into social energy.” The disurbanists proposed the creation of a network that could re-energise energy and power plants across the territory through a nomadic, light, individual, decomposable habitat to regroup and assemble diverse collective habitats, but which were also easily decomposable ... non-familial nomadic cells. This utopia existed outside the family. Its aim was the disappearance of the division between centre and periphery.

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Love and Communism

Just as communism has been replaced by a negotiation of rights, so love has become a contractual matter, a commitment to exchange. Love no longer even has an experience of the end: One is dead to the other, perhaps with a text message.

For Tari, one reason for the analogy between love and communism could be that both have the same relationship to time: They fight against the present and against the dominant reality, and their possibility of becoming is always in proportion to the impossibility of the present moment. Both share the desire to suspend history, both establish a state of exception, both want to turn off the clocks, for both every moment is decisive. Communism and love are ultimately linked by the desire to live intensities. This leads Tari to a Benjaminian formulation: “This is love against history.” And continues Tari: “Only those who have experienced love can arrive directly at communism. And logically, the more we know how to love someone, the greater the possibility that communism will come.”

That the I loves another, that one can experience love, merely indicates the inadequacy of the I to have any experience at all and, on the other hand, reveals the happiness of the pure experience of sharing. Therefore, this experience devalues both the I and the Other by exposing their names as totally inadequate. I disenfranchise the other while he does the same to me, and within this “motionless movement” there is a shared experience of the world. Love appears where the ego disappears, and it disappears again when the ego arises again.

Nevertheless, if it comes about against all odds precisely to the extent that it appears in the world as a form of happiness and therefore cannot be appropriated, love itself can overcome failure without losing an iota of its potential. It is as destructive as it is creative. It is poor and powerful at the same time, present even in its absence, like revolution. It can come into being at

any moment, like the Messiah. Love remains a happy experience, even in abandonment. Deleuze says love does not consist in the relationship as such, but in the effect. Love passes from one phase of life to another, from one intensity to another – and even a failed love still shows an experience of happiness, as long as it witnessed the growth of potential. Benjamin writes: “Happiness is conceivable to us only in the air we have breathed, among the people who have lived with us. In other words, it resonates in the idea of happiness the idea of salvation.” This is love against history. Everything that is true for lovers is also true for the commune, for a people that is not yet there, for a revolutionary class, because if it is true that I am not centred in me, then we find in the middle, between the I that cancels out the ego and the we that I am, the I that experiences the world with the other.

Against love, Kurt Röttgers has set seduction, which for him is not a strategy but is based on unpredictable concatenations, which in turn presuppose reciprocity, which, unlike love, knows no jealousy. Seduction is based on entanglement, insofar as seduction and being seduced are complementary. While the seduced sees the being-seen, the seeing of the being-seen is in turn seen by the seducer. Thus the seducer is also the seduced and the seduced becomes the seducer. Here, a medial event takes place in the in-between, within the framework of a delayed rapprochement that knows closeness and distance and thus the difference and thus also allows for the figure of the third. But seduction does not remain in the space of the visible, mystery always clings to it, indeed seduction leads even more into the approximate of a gaze, and indeed into the abyss, which is only possible through the social, which for Röttgers is a text. For Röttgers, in contrast, the possibility space of power, which has the modal structure of a field, opens up.

Power and Destitution

Although destitution represents an operation that deprives the power of the present of any basis, it can never be accomplished by a single gesture, declaration or event. Instead, it represents an atmosphere in which gestures, words and moments can take place, an air that we breathe. As we pass through it, we can perceive the intensities that carry us beyond a certain threshold of ethics and politics. Revolution – like justice or love – is neither an institution nor a particular form of morality, nor is it a virtuous historical adventure. Rather, it is a “state of the world”. It can be defeated, but there is no unhappy revolution. However, there are certainly many unhappy revolutionaries. Thus Tari.

To be destitutionary, the action of a “real politics” must again rid itself of all distractions and the resulting notion that salvation lies only in the ceaseless march towards the future. Destitution, on the other hand, stems from a maxim that overturns the common sense of the petty bourgeois: It is never what is produced in the future that constitutes the value of a given action. This is perhaps the dividing line between destitutive and constitutive power. The latter is directed towards the future.

If the ethico-political message of Benjamin’s “Theses on the Philosophy of History” is to live each moment as if it were the moment when the Messiah comes, it is because at that moment each action, each epoch, each thought and each life can be judged individually. These are often regarded as separate functions; there is then a gap between them which organisation is called upon to fill. But since there is no such thing as a void in nature or in politics, it is precisely this

(only seemingly empty) space of mediation that is immediately and externally occupied by the “new”. In this sense, destituting power emancipates itself from the classical concept of political action, which is to be understood as organisation and domination outside of everyday life.

There are no revolutionary peoples until revolution has revealed itself in the world. As Eric Hazan has rightly observed, “It is collective activity from which true politics emerges, not the other way around.” Or, to return to Rosa Luxemburg: “The organisation does not provide the troops for the struggle, but the struggle increasingly provides recruits for the organisation.”

Without having to enumerate again the struggles of recent years, it seems certain to Tari that it was not the emergence of a classical subject that was at the centre of the struggles, but rather places – existential territories and geographical territories – the banlieues, the mountain, the square and the neighbourhood – became the subject. These territories emerge from the struggle and they do not pre-exist. Moreover, territories are inhabited, but there is no a priori commonality between the living beings that inhabit them, except for the act of struggling in, through and with the territories themselves. Territories are thus neither the subject nor the object of struggle, but rather the means and medium of struggle, and it is for this reason that one ultimately inhabits them.

In the progressive and social democratic hypothesis, today's political activity refers not to the present and even less to the past, but to a mythical future. This shift to the future clearly requires that one does not interrupt the continuity of power today. Therefore, for Tari, democracy, which is formlessness par excellence, is the perfect conductor of power.

Revolutionary power certainly exists. It exists, but it is a power that dispenses with itself while competing against a hostile power. Constituent power, on the other hand, will always find it necessary to have an external prosthesis in order to become concrete, the dual motif of “government and leader” in which the present hyper-personification of the latter is merely an index of the hyper-abstraction of the former.

Destituent politics is based on forms, not informality. In reality, informality is a technique of government practised by small groups of different origins and ideological disciplines, including the police. Informality and formlessness have become the hallmarks of democratic government. Governance, much discussed in recent years, is nothing but the near-perfect government of a formlessness that can, however, take any form. It exists equally through software, a neighbour, a police platoon, a railway line, economic reform or a large warehouse. Current democracy is a police government, as Benjamin already noted: “[The police power] is formless, like its nowhere tangible, all-pervading, ghostly presence in the life of civilised states.”

Indeed, power has no form of its own; it exercises itself through specific points. Power passes away; it is not bound to anything. Government, in order to function, needs an absolute freedom from forms and their bonds. Power does not aim directly at objects or individuals, but at possibilities and potentialities. Foucault said that the typical act of power is that of instigating and provoking. Consequently, the decline of the modern state and its institutions should also be understood as the expulsion of form by government. To claim that power today is in infrastructure – given the hegemony of the production circuit – does not mean that power has produced new forms, but on the contrary that it has completely freed itself from form. For Tari, the only remaining politics of form – or rather, of the conflict between forms – is communism.

And if one insists on forms of life, it is simply because only these have the capacity to resist the informal stabilisation of government. One is reminded that, according to Foucault, power is not something that can be possessed, but only exercised, because it is above all not a “thing”, it has no autonomous substance, but it is a “relation” – or better still, a “diffuse relation”. The call to “take power” seems more like a misguided attempt to follow a weak version of the autonomy of the political.

When operaism did not yet have a name, Mario Tronti claimed that the class could not become revolutionary by accumulating political capital through a politics of demands in order to then gain power through an economic self-aggrandisement, as was the case with the “bourgeois revolutions”, but only through the accumulation of power by presenting itself directly as a figure of the political. Tari assumes that this position of an autonomy of the revolutionary political is in polemical opposition to those who put forward demands such as that of improving the mode of production in order to consume more, to directly manage large parts of the economy and strengthen productive cooperation within the capitalist mode of production, to govern the metropolis, to “save capital from itself” and to slowly transform society into a kind of rule of cyber-communism, a kind of secular, staged eschatology. Tronti calls for an approach that rejects economics as the key to the vault of power. He explicitly calls for politics to be used against the economy to make it subaltern.

For Tari, Tronti’s error lies in placing the relationship between the proletariat and the working class in tension by underestimating the former and placing everything on the latter: “Proletarian demands are usually presented within a fragmentary list of positive demands, all of which consist in the demand for an improvement in economic conditions, a demand which essentially consists in an improvement in the conditions of exploitation. It seems, however, that the opposite has occurred. The fact that the proletariat is identified over time with a particular social class, namely the working class, which claims prerogatives and rights for itself, is the worst misunderstanding of Marx’s thought. What served as a strategic identification for Marx – the working class as *ktesis* and as a historical figure dependent on the proletariat – becomes instead a full-fledged social identity, necessarily accompanied by the loss of its revolutionary vocation.”

Tronti’s hypothesis could only have won if the Italian Hot Autumn [Autunno caldo] of 1969 had immediately become a workers’ revolution. But this could not happen, because by that time capital had already begun to restructure things and people. The fragmentation of the proletariat as a result of this capitalist reaction could only lie in a diffusion of the conflict.

The mistake of so-called post-operaismo was then to accept the dwindling of the working class as a revolutionary subject, but never to grasp the “domination of the political”. As Gigi Roggero writes, the limit of postoperaismo lies in its fascination with the technical composition of labour, which immediately becomes politics through an elegant manoeuvre, namely an appeal to the “automatic emergence of a new subject” bearing the name of the immaterial worker. This is followed by a constant retreat by means of making demands, the irritating acceptance of reformist solutions, enthusiasm for the politics of rights, and confusing positions on fundamental questions such as that of destituting potential. Ultimately, postoperaismo seems to have become the fashionable socialism of a section of the “creative class”.

Yet it is precisely left-wing populism that revives something that no longer exists. Representation

and parliament no longer have power, the latter is completely concentrated in the executive, which in neoliberalism does not carry out the orders of the “people” or the common good, but those of capital and property. Carl Schmitt already described the executive as the engine of the state machinery and we have pointed out several times that this is an important moment of state fascisation. The positioning of left populism (and its theoretical systematisation by Laclau and Mouffe) prevents the naming of the enemy. Its categories (“caste”, “those from above” and “those from below”) are only one step away from conspiracy theory and two steps away from its culmination, the denunciation of “international Jewry” that would control the world through finance. These confusions, perpetuated by the leaders and theorists of a populism of the left, continue to plague the movements.

If, as Foucault asserts, the goal of government is to guide behaviour (and thus act on the level of ethics), then it could be said that this is done today through a subtle yet powerful infrastructural network informed by the cybernetic form of command. The strategic horizon of the struggle against infrastructure cannot be considered without understanding that it requires all singularities. The motto “You have to change your life” that seems to be inscribed in every insurrection today means, from the beginning, “You have to renounce your ego in order to liberate the self and encounter what we all have in common”. This is both the opening and the final frontier of any current revolutionary gesture.

Foucault is not saying that civil war is an exception in the unfolding of historical conflicts, but that civil war (and not class struggle) is the permanent condition: Civil war is “the matrix of all struggles for power, of all strategies of power, and consequently it is also the matrix of all struggles for and against power. Tari briefly summarises Foucault’s thesis: (1) there is never a civil war that is not also directly a collective affair, a conflict between collectives; (2) civil war not only brings these groups, these collectives, to the fore, but it also reconstructs them; (3) civil war never precedes the constitution of power, nor is it necessarily the element that makes power disappear; instead, it occurs within constituted political power; (4) civil war reactivates fragments of the past – as both Walter Benjamin and Furio Jesi understood very well –, and its revolts aim not so much to destroy symbolic elements of power as to take possession of them in order to endow them with other roles; (5) the daily exercise of power should be seen as civil war. For Foucault, civil war replaces the role that class struggle has played in historical materialism, or rather, it makes class struggle an episode in the middle of the period of stasis.

If power, according to a famous definition by Foucault, is an action against an action, then the problem to be solved is how to get rid of this dialectic of action in order to replace it with the epic dialectic of gesture. Short-circuiting this dialectic, which denies the power relation itself, means interrupting it, negating the relation and stepping out of it. It means seeing the destituent gesture as a wedge that inserts itself between action and potential. The proliferation of gesture, Tari argues, corresponds to a decrease in action; a decrease in the productivity of right corresponds to an increase in use; an increase in potential means a decrease in power. Gesture interrupts, while action identifies and establishes, via negation, a continuity that is both “homogeneous and empty”, i.e. formless. The gesture means to correct this negativity so that it appears as form. The gesture blocks the ego that constitutes the context of action, and it is

through this interruption that form emerges. But the gesture not only interrupts what is outside of it, it also acts back on itself. If action is always directed towards a goal (and in this sense it is always economic), then gesture destitutes action insofar as it dissolves both the subject and its economy. Unlike the action, the gesture does not have to end, but remains a becoming. The gesture allows each subject to decide in the right and just way how something ends or begins. In this sense, the gesture that interrupts is always a desubjectification, while the action represents a subject that is always acting and constantly present.

There is an impersonal, abstract and anonymous form of power that is anchored in the economic processes of capital itself, rather than merely complementing them externally. The power of capital is characterised above all by the fact that it can be exercised through the execution of economic processes. Instead of seeing power as a relationship between an A and a B, Foucault also sees it as the ability to “direct leadership”, that is, that in the exercise of power “some structure the possible field of action of others”. Moreover, his emphasis on institutional structures and the myriad practices through which relations of power are established at the micro level of everyday life is in clear contrast to the “intervention model”, which assumes the exercise of power in the form of discrete events, namely that power relations somehow exist outside economic relations – economic relations are also power relations.

Production and Revolution

Remaining inactive is thus essentially directed towards the removal of every externality that sets itself up as the ruler of life, beginning with the organisation of labour. To stop doing something external simply means to stop doing it – not with production as such, but with the metaphysics of production. If production is put in the place of command and transformed into the “principle of the epoch”, then it will always end up dominating everything else externally. Maybe it's possible to produce a subject like you produce a car, but you can't do it with a revolution. Or maybe you can, and this revolution will then necessarily be constituent and produce the same problem of violence and law, and thus of the state and the police. Marx himself described freedom as that state of the world which is characterised by the absence of an external goal and sees it as alien to production, i.e. it lies by its very nature outside the sphere of material production. The exercise of thought is never related to this sphere precisely because true thought cannot come from outside, nor can it be reduced to the labour that emerges from it. As Mario Tronti says: “The point is this: thought, both in its content and in its form, cannot come from outside. Either it arises from within or not at all.”

At this point, Tari emphasises that the category of production is not supposed to magically disappear, but that the metaphysical primacy it has enjoyed for far too long in Western history, especially after the rise of capitalism, is coming to an end. A celebration, for example, still requires activity, but it is not productive, that is, it is not generated from outside and does not aim to acquire or produce anything that is external to it. The feast is the paradigm of the interruption of ordinary time, but it has no purpose other than that enforced by itself, namely an “end in itself”. For contemporary Western civilisation, reality is radically abstract and without content of its own. It is a “hyper-object” whose main characteristic is that it is deprived of truth. However, this is no longer reality, but rather the deformed image of the real, which has lost all sense of reality. A

world without a sense of reality is not so much a world without quality, but a world in which the good life is filled up with narcissism, illusion and the hypertrophic ability to sell and consume everything, starting with oneself.

Reality and truth, when separated and taken for themselves, are of little interest. They only become interesting when they come together and trigger an act of becoming – when they cause a transformation of the world. Recourse to a principle of reality without an ethics of truth is not only reactionary, but involves acceptance of the status quo. If reality is not always pleasant, neither is truth. When one lives in a world where the real is lies, exploitation and cynicism, truth all too easily appears in the hyper-realistic guise of an avenging angel. The meeting of reality and truth in history is a sensual, enthusiastic experience, one that crosses the threshold, abandons the anaesthetic and reaches the point where we are no longer prepared to tolerate the intolerable.

Uprising in Argentina

The Argentine uprising is paradigmatic because it does not illuminate the epoch from a place of transcendence that looks down on the world, but it rises from the depths of catastrophe, which is itself a truth. It becomes certain of its singularity through the event, first locally and then as a sense of a strategy for life and a tactic for struggle, a form of life and a form of organisation. In Badiou's words, "An insurrection can be purely singular and universal at the same time: purely singular because it is a moment and universal because this moment is ultimately the expression of general and fundamental contradictions."

Colectivo Situaciones from Argentina write that the Argentinian uprising came to be known as *piqueteros* [the pickets] because the form of the conflict was a general picket movement that blocked the political-economic processes of the city. The disruption of processes meant a direct intervention in the networks of control and the disruption of representation kept alive by the omnipresence of a techno-police system. Spectacle, commodities, police and infrastructure form a governing apparatus that produces contemporary subjectivity through a secured environment generated by each of these factors, each intervening in the other, up to the present moment when "smart cities" are planned. Thus, each individual becomes simultaneously (or alternately) a commodity, a policeman, an actor and, above all, a part of the infrastructure.

As the Argentine collective notes, a destituting insurgency cannot be thought of in classical political terms, such as measuring its effectiveness in terms of its immediate and superficial political successes – one more right won or one less minister, but must instead be thought of as the opening of a field of possibilities. The Argentine insurgency paradigm thus finds its point of no return in the temporal and subjective deformation of the world rather than in any progressive effect. In this sense, the emergence of an insurgency has more to do with fantasy than with economic-political considerations. An "authentic fantasy" consists in the process of dissolving what exists, including the forms that manifest themselves in the act of dissolution; it implies a "purely negative" practice that is neither entirely destructive nor productive. The paradigm of the destituent insurrection that emerged from the events of 19 and 20 December 2001 is that of a political form that is incompatible with the form of value. If theorists like Hardt and Negri, who both witnessed the 2001 uprising and later wrote prefaces for the text of *Colectivo Situaciones*,

drew on the language of the commune, it was because there, as Marx put it in relation to the 1871 commune, the political form of freedom was rediscovered. That is, what is new about this political sequence is that it did not take the form of struggles of production and circulation, but of struggles that Amy De'Ath calls "antisocial reproduction". The essence and function of "antisocial reproduction" is that social reproduction is realised without recourse to the market or the state. And this is what Marx saw as the "form of freedom" in the Paris Commune and what we see again in Argentina at the turn of the century in the form of a destituting uprising.

It is within these fantastic fault lines, that is, within the temporal caesura in which the revolt is to be found, that we should look for the tangible changes in revolutionary subjectivity, according to Tari, and not for any new institution created by the revolt, still less for the composition of the government that sooner or later follows it. The governments that come to power after revolts witness their own defeat, their inability to dissolve the forms of evil against which they have risen. It has always been the case that a lack of imagination means certain defeat for revolutionaries. The Colectivo Situaciones stresses that it is important not to confuse the situation with the notion of the local, because "the situation consists in the practical awareness that the whole does not exist separately from the part, but rather exists in the part." This is different from the local or the particular, which seems to exist only in relation to the globalised whole, in which every local aspect, practice or thought is part of the whole. with the totality that guarantees the coherence of globality increasingly abstract and distant. In this important passage, Tari finds the replica of Tronti's dictum about totality, according to which it can only be grasped and confronted through a partiality.

In fact, they write that the new social protagonism does not produce a new subject because the kind of subject that past revolutions relied on to develop a constituent power no longer exists. If there is a subject, there is also constituent power and vice versa. For Tari, however, the idea of a new social protagonism inadvertently rehabilitates a vision of revolution that assumes a revolutionary subject, even though the Colectivo Situaciones does its best to think of possibilities opened up by different situations, rather than indulging in Bolshevik thought experiments and wondering which is the appropriate actor to carry out a revolution that has already begun. In the latter sense, then, what the Colectivo calls "social protagonism" is after all a singular concretisation of what Guattari calls "transversal relations"; relations between different social groups to wage a struggle on many fronts, as he put it. The collective, for Tari, says some interesting things about this non-subject. For example, unlike classical political subjectivity, it claims to have a "non-knowledge" of the situation, which is not simply ignorance, but an admission that there is no universal knowledge that applies everywhere and in all contexts. The destitution of assumed knowledge goes hand in hand with the abandonment of those guarantees that the old subjectivity seemed to guarantee. In this last point, Tari finds an example of what it really means to render politics ineffective.

If we replace the subject with the situation, we also see a strategic intuition emerge. With the disappearance of the subject as a centre, something else enters the scene, which includes a place and a form of life within itself, which in turn acquires a certain consistency and duration. These are precisely the forms of organisation that, according to Tronti, are lacking in today's social movements. It is no longer wages, work or welfare (as many post-operaists, post-Marxists

and post-democratic thinkers continue to claim) around which the fabric of struggles can be woven and eventually verticalised, but life itself. Perhaps the objection to Tari's vitalism, however, is that it is no longer life itself that is solely at stake.

According to the Colectivo Situaciones, the gesture they experienced was an ethical operation:

"We think that an ethic has two parts, so to speak: a) subtraction in relation to the given conditions; and b) weaponisation in the situation that transforms the determination into a condition." However, there is an important difference between the first and second versions, which lies in the fact that they are not two different aspects, but a single gesture. The idea of "resonance" is particularly apt for Tari to describe the way in which the spirit of the destitutionary uprising develops like a musical rhythm. As the Invisible Committee writes, "Revolutionary movements spread not by contagion but by resonance. Something that is constituted here resonates with the shock wave emanating from something that is constituted there. The uprising is by no means a linear process like a plague or a forest fire that spreads from place to place after an initial ignition. Rather, it takes the form of music whose focal points, even if they are scattered in time and space, are able to impose the rhythm of their own vibrations, which then gain more and more density. Until the point where a return to normality is no longer desirable or even imaginable."

The uprising of 19 and 20 December 2001 took place regardless of any centralised form of organisation, which is often interpreted as a shortcoming, but in this context it turns out to be its real strength. As Colectivo Situaciones writes, it came about through a collective development that transcends any organisational structure and which, for this very reason, was prevented from hegemonising and symbolising the constitution of a movement. Not allowing this kind of centralisation of an uprising does not, of course, mean being disorganised. Nevertheless, the question of organisation arises at a level that wants to be and remains immanent in every "situation".

So many times in history, the revolutionary meaning of the words "centralisation" and "verticalisation" lies in their focus on the possibility of breaking through the inexorable mechanism of state temporality at multiple points. Centralisation really lies in the potential to stop this form of time – to turn the clocks – and constitute revolutionary forms of life. True verticalisation lies in the ability to express both a material force, whether defensive or offensive, and a spirituality capable of perceiving the beauty of a landscape as well as that of the shields erected before the phalanxes of cybernetic nihilism. The linking of the two dimensions results in the scheme of the revolutionary organisation, whose level of immanence is as global as its material existence.

The destituent gesture refers neither to an action of the citizens nor to that of a homogeneous "humanity", but is characterised as the use of the political by the proletariat and creates first and foremost a bifurcation of the spatio-temporal and ethico-political path: the separation between justice and right. True justice is no longer identified with an authority or with virtue, but, as Benjamin says, with a "state of the world". To rise up and destroy government is to suspend its laws by a gesture that has no juridical purpose or meaning, but is in itself the production of another state of the world. Justice, then, is destructive, including to the judiciary, by stymieing the

constructive ambiguities of law. Among the many (and often reactionary) configurations of the catechon, “justice” is the one that most closely corresponds to its revolutionary version. From this perspective, any constituent/constituted power must remain far below justice.

Benjamin’s statements about the relationship between justice and right are quite clear: “To every good, as delimited in the order of time and space, clings the character of possession...

Possession, however...is always unjust. Therefore, no system based on possession or property can lead to justice / Rather, justice lies in the condition of a good that cannot be a possession,” Only when society has gotten rid of bourgeois law, which is nothing other than the legal expression of the form of property, is the totality of capital over for Benjamin. So it is not surprising when Benjamin affirms the necessity of the end of history, a kind of redemption that is no longer alloyed with the most insane metaphysical determinism and thus relies on the experience of freedom, which is enriched by the indeterminate as eternal form.

Often, justice is located in the tension between equality and freedom, where it is necessary to create the right balance between the two because these separate social phenomena are in conflict with each other. Thus, greater inequality can be the result of greater freedom. However, freedom and equality can also coexist. Robert Meister conceives of justice as an option. Here, the option form serves as a metaphor for historical justice, insofar as it is precisely historical injustice that gives the currently disadvantaged a demand or a conditional right to return this injustice to the current profiteers. To put a put.

Rather, historical justice is about the ongoing ability to profit differentially and cumulatively from past inequality, to gain more than other people when things go well, and to lose less than other people when things go badly. It is describable in the language of options themselves, as one can leverage gains and mitigate losses by buying and selling options. Capitalism perpetuates and reinforces the inequality that already exists, including the inequality that already exists as a result of injustice. Capitalism is an accelerator of injustice. But the same mechanisms used to accelerate injustice can also be used to reverse it and make the gains from bad history available because they are financial gains that can be made available in financial form. Options and freedom both involve choice, but an option is not simply a way of exercising a choice. An option can exist even when there is no choice. In other words, we used to think of freedoms as options that can be exercised, which is why capitalism was thought of as a trade-off between greater freedom, which gives you options, and greater inequality, which reduces options. The value of justice as an option is a time value that depends in large part on the political risk we can create through democracy for the continued liquidity of accumulated wealth.

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